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A SYMPHONY OF THE SPIRIT

COMPILED BY

GEORGE S. MERRIAM

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Love has but one symbol in language, and that is *forever*.

MUNGER.

Is the dead friend mysteriously here, even as we are here mysteriously, with God? Know of a truth that only the time-shadows have perished or are perishable.

CARLYLE.

Can you think that this vanishing for a time has made you less responsible to them? Can you love them less because they are far from sight? I have often thought that the arrangement by which loved and loving beings are to pass through death is nothing but the last experiment appointed by God to human love; and often, as you know from me, I have felt that a moment of true soul-communing with my dead friend was opening a source of strength for me unhoped for here. Be strong then, and true to those you loved. Get up and work; do not set yourself apart from us.

MAZZINI.

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

PSALMIST.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

JESUS.

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A SYMPHONY OF THE SPIRIT.

"HOW PURE AT HEART."

How pure at heart and sound in head,
With what divine affections bold,
Should be the man whose thought would hold
An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou, or any, call
The spirits from their golden day,
Except, like them, thou too canst say,
My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,
Imaginations calm and fair,
The memory like a cloudless air,
The conscience as a sea at rest.

But when the heart is full of din,
And doubt beside the portal waits,
They can but listen at the gates,
And hear the household jar within.

TENNYSON.

AFTER THE BURIAL.

Yes, faith is a goodly anchor;
When skies are sweet as a psalm,
At the bows it lolls so stalwart,
In bluff, broad-shouldered calm.

And when over breakers to leeward
The tattered surges are hurled,
It may keep our head to the tempest,
With its grip on the base of the world.

But, after the shipwreck, tell me
What help in its iron thews,
Still true to the broken hawser,
Deep down among seaweed and ooze?

In the breaking gulfs of sorrow,
When the helpless feet stretch out
And find in the deeps of darkness
No footing so solid as doubt,

Then better one spar of Memory,
One broken plank of the Past,
That our human heart may cling to,
Though hopeless of shore at last!

To the spirit its splendid conjectures,
To the flesh its sweet despair,
Its tears o'er the thin-worn locket
With its anguish of deathless hair!

Immortal? I feel it and know it,
Who doubts it of such as she?
But that is the pang's very secret, —
Immortal away from me.

There 's a narrow ridge in the graveyard
Would scarce stay a child in his race,
But to me and my thought it is wider
Than the star-sown vague of Space.

Your logic, my friend, is perfect,
Your morals most drearily true;
But, since the earth clashed on her coffin,
I keep hearing that, and not you.

Console if you will, I can bear it;
'T is a well-meant alms of breath;
But not all the preaching since Adam
Has made Death other than Death.

It is pagan; but wait till you feel it, —
That jar of our earth, that dull shock
When the ploughshare of deeper passion
Tears down to our primitive rock.

Communion in spirit! Forgive me,
But I, who am earthy and weak,
Would give all my incomes from dreamland
For a touch of her hand on my cheek.

That little shoe in the corner,
So worn and wrinkled and brown,
With its emptiness confutes you,
And argues your wisdom down.

LOWELL.

"HERE WE HAVE TO WAIT."

HERE we have to wait
Not so long neither! Could we by a wish
Have what we will and get the future now,
Would we wish aught done undone in the past?
So, let him wait God's instant men call years;
Meantime hold hard by truth and his great soul,
Do out the duty! Through such souls alone
God stooping shows sufficient of his light
For us in the dark to rise by.

BROWNING.

"GRIEF SHOULD BE LIKE JOY."

Grief should be
Like Joy: majestic, equable, sedate;
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free;
Strong to consume small troubles, — to commend
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to the end.

Aubrey de Vere.

"MY SORROW IS MY THRONE."

My sorrow is my throne!
It lifts me from the dust of earthly care;
'T is calm and peaceful, though so cold and lone —
And wider prospects stretch before me there.

My sorrow is my crown!
A glory round the worn and aching brow;
I would not lay its thorny circlet down
For any flowers earth has to offer now.

Yet sometimes I could deem
I heard *his* voice, loved voice that guides me, say,
"The earth we loved must never trivial seem,
Although our joy has passed from earth away.

"Go down, at my behest,
The smallest, humblest, kindly task to do;
I see the thorn-prints; hide them from the rest;
Because thou lov'st me so, love others too."

LUCY SMITH.

DIRGE.

I REACHED the middle of the mount
  Up which the incarnate soul must climb,
And paused for them, and looked around,
  With me who walked through space and time.

Five rosy boys with morning light
  Had leaped from one fair mother's arms,
Fronted the sun with hope as bright,
  And greeted God with childhood's psalms.

Knows he who tills this lonely field
  To reap its scanty corn,
What mystic fruit his acres yield
  At midnight and at morn?

In the long sunny afternoon
  The plain was full of ghosts;
I wandered up, I wandered down,
  Beset by pensive hosts.

The winding Concord gleamed below,
  Pouring as wide a flood

As when my brothers, long ago,
Came with me to the wood.

But they are gone, — the holy ones
Who trod with me this lovely vale;
The strong, star-bright companions
Are silent, low, and pale.

My good, my noble, in their prime,
Who made this world the feast it was,
Who learned with me the lore of time,
Who loved this dwelling-place!

They took this valley for their toy,
They played with it in every mood;
A cell for prayer, a hall for joy, —
They treated nature as they would.

They colored the horizon round;
Stars flamed and faded as they bade,
All echoes hearkened for their sound, —
They made the woodlands glad or mad.

I touch this flower of silken leaf,
Which once our childhood knew;
Its soft leaves wound me with a grief
Whose balsam never grew.

Hearken to yon pine-warbler
Singing aloft in the tree!

Hearest thou, O traveler,
What he singeth to me?

Not unless God made sharp thine ear
With sorrow such as mine,
Out of that delicate lay couldst thou
Its heavy tale divine.

"Go, lonely man," it saith;
"They loved thee from their birth;
Their hands were pure, and pure their faith, —
There are no such hearts on earth.

"Ye drew one mother's milk,
One chamber held ye all;
A very tender history
Did in your childhood fall.

"You cannot unlock your heart,
The key is gone with them;
The silent organ loudest chants
The master's requiem."

EMERSON.

THE DEAD FRIEND.

Not to the grave, not to the grave, my soul,
Descend to contemplate
The form that once was dear!
The spirit is not there
Which kindled that dead eye,
Which throbbed in that cold heart,
Which in that motionless hand
Hath met thy friendly grasp.
The spirit is not there!
It is but lifeless, perishable flesh
That moulders in the grave,
Earth, air, and water's ministering particles
Now to the elements
Resolved, their uses done.
Not to the grave, not to the grave, my soul,
Follow thy friend beloved,
The spirit is not there!

Often together have we talked of death:
How sweet it were to see
All doubtful things made clear;
How sweet it were, with powers
Such as the Cherubim,

To view the depth of Heaven!
O Edmund! thou hast first
Begun the travel of Eternity!
I look upon the stars,
And think that thou art there,
Unfettered as the thought that follows thee.

And we have often said how sweet it were
With unseen ministry of angel power
To watch the friends we loved.
Edmund, we did not err!
Sure I have felt thy presence! thou hast given
A birth to holy thought,
Hast kept me from the world unstained and pure.
Edmund, we did not err!
Our best affections here,
They are not like the toys of infancy;
The soul outgrows them not;
We do not cast them off;
Oh, if it could be so,
It were indeed a dreadful thing to die!

Not to the grave, not to the grave, my soul,
Follow thy friend beloved!
But in the lonely hour,
But in the evening walk,
Think that he companies thy solitude;

Think that he holds with thee
Mysterious intercourse:
And though remembrance wake a tear,
There will be joy in grief.

SOUTHEY.

"AND IF THERE BE WHOSE TENDER FRAMES HAVE DROOPED."

And if there be whose tender frames have drooped
Even to the dust, apparently through weight
Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power
An agonizing sorrow to transmute,
Infer not hence a hope from those withheld
When wanted most; a confidence impaired
So pitiably that, having ceased to see
With bodily eyes, they are borne down by love
Of what is lost, and perish through regret.
Oh no! full oft the innocent sufferer sees
Too clearly, feels too vividly, and longs
To realize the vision with intense
And over-constant yearning: there, there lies
The excess, by which the balance is destroyed.
Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,
This vital warmth too cold, these visual orbs,
Though inconceivably endowed, too dim
For any passion of the soul that leads
To ecstasy, and, all the crooked paths
Of time and change disdaining, takes its course
Along the lines of limitless desires.

WORDSWORTH.

THRENODY.

Ah, vainly do these eyes recall
The school-march, each day's festival,
When every morn my bosom glowed
To watch the convoy on the road;
The babe in willow wagon closed,
With rolling eyes and face composed;
With children forward and behind,
Like Cupids studiously inclined;
And he the chieftain paced beside,
The centre of the troop allied,
With sunny face of sweet repose,
To guard the babe from fancied foes.
The little captain innocent
Took the eye with him as he went;
Each village senior paused to scan
And speak the lovely caravan.
From the window I look out
To mark thy beautiful parade,
Stately marching in cap and coat
To some tune by fairies played; —
A music heard by thee alone
To works as noble led thee on.

Now Love and Pride, alas! in vain,
Up and down their glances strain.
The painted sled stands where it stood;
The kennel by the corded wood;
His gathered sticks to stanch the wall
Of the snow-tower, when snow should fall;
The ominous hole he dug in the sand,
And childhood's castles built or planned;
His daily haunts I well discern, —
The poultry-yard, the shed, the barn, —
And every inch of garden ground
Paced by the blessed feet around,
From the roadside to the brook
Whereinto he loved to look.
Step the meek fowls where erst they ranged;
The wintry garden lies unchanged;
The brook into the stream runs on;
But the deep-eyed boy is gone.

. . . . . .

Was there no star that could be sent,
No watcher in the firmament,
No angel from the countless host
That loiters round the crystal coast,
Could stoop to heal that only child,
Nature's sweet marvel undefiled,
And keep the blossom of the earth,
Which all her harvests were not worth?
Not mine, — I never called thee mine,

But Nature's heir, — if I repine,
And seeing rashly torn and moved
Not what I made, but what I loved,
Grow early old with grief that thou
Must to the wastes of Nature go, —
'T is because a general hope
Was quenched, and all must doubt and grope.
. . . . . .
To be alone wilt thou begin
When worlds of lovers hem thee in?
To-morrow, when the masks shall fall
That dizen Nature's carnival,
The pure shall see by their own will,
Which overflowing Love shall fill,
'T is not within the force of fate
The fate-conjoined to separate.
But thou, my votary, weepest thou?
I gave thee sight — where is it now?
I taught thy heart beyond the reach
Of ritual, bible, or of speech;
Wrote in thy mind's transparent table,
As far as the incommunicable;
Taught thee each private sign to raise
Lit by the supersolar blaze.
Past utterance, and past belief,
And past the blasphemy of grief,
The mysteries of Nature's heart;
And though no Muse can these impart,

Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,
And all is clear from east to west.

. . . . . .

Fair the soul's recess and shrine,
Magic-built to last a season,
Masterpiece of love benign;
Fairer that expansive reason
Whose omen 't is, and sign.
Wilt thou not ope thy heart to know
What rainbows teach, and sunsets show?
Verdict which accumulates
From lengthening scroll of human fates,
Voice of earth to earth returned,
Prayers of saints that inly burned, —
Saying, *What is excellent,*
As God lives, is permanent;
Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain;
Heart's love will meet thee again.
Revere the Maker; fetch thine eye
Up to his style, and manners of the sky.
Not of adamant and gold
Built He heaven stark and cold;
No, but a nest of bending reeds,
Flowering grass, and scented weeds;
Or like a traveler's fleeing tent,
Or bow above the tempest bent;
Built of tears and sacred flames,
And virtue reaching to its aims;
Built of furtherance and pursuing,

Not of spent deeds, but of doing.
Silent rushes the swift Lord
Through ruined systems still restored,
Broad-sowing, bleak and void to bless,
Plants with worlds the wilderness ;
Waters with tears of ancient sorrow
Apples of Eden ripe to-morrow.
House and tenant go to ground,
Lost in God, in Godhead found.

EMERSON.

THE ALPINE SHEPHERD.

When on my ear your loss was knelled,
And tender sympathy upburst,
A little spring from memory welled,
Which once had quenched my bitter thirst.

And I was fain to bear to you
A portion of its mild relief,
That it might be as healing dew,
To steal some fever from your grief.

After our child's untroubled breath
Up to the Father took its way,
And on our home the shade of death
Like a long twilight haunting lay,

And friends came round, with us to weep
Her little spirit's swift remove,
The story of the Alpine sheep
Was told to us by one we love.

They, in the valley's sheltering care,
Soon crop the meadow's tender prime,
And when the sod grows brown and bare,
The shepherd strives to make them climb

To airy shelves of pasture green
That hang along the mountain's side,
Where grass and flowers together lean,
And down through mists the sunbeams slide.

But naught can tempt the timid things
The steep and rugged path to try,
Though sweet the shepherd calls and sings,
And seared below the pastures lie, —

Till in his arms their lambs he takes,
Along the dizzy verge to go,
Then, heedless of the rifts and breaks,
They follow on, o'er rock and snow.

And in those pastures, lifted fair,
More dewy-soft than lowland mead,
The shepherd drops his tender care,
And sheep and lambs together feed.

This parable, by Nature breathed,
Blew on me as the south wind free
O'er frozen brooks, that flow unsheathed
From icy thralldom to the sea.

A blissful vision through the night
Would all my happy senses sway,
Of the good Shepherd on the height,
Or climbing up the stony way,

Holding *our* little lamb asleep, —
While, like the murmur of the sea,
Sounded that voice along the deep,
Saying, " Arise, and follow me ! "

MARIA WHITE LOWELL.

SEAWEED.

Not always unimpeded can I pray,
Nor, pitying saint, thine intercession claim ;
Too closely clings the burden of the day,
And all the mint and anise that I pay
But swells my debt and deepens my self-blame.

Shall I less patience have than Thou, who know
That Thou revisit'st all who wait for Thee,
Nor only fill'st the unsounded deeps below,
But dost refresh with punctual overflow
The rifts where unregarded mosses be ?

The drooping seaweed hears, in night abyssed,
Far and more far the wave's receding shocks,
Nor doubts, for all the darkness and the mist,
That the pale shepherdess will keep her tryst,
And shoreward lead again her foam-fleeced
flocks.

For the same wave that rims the Carib shore
With momentary brede of pearl and gold,
Goes hurrying thence to gladden with its roar
Lorn weeds bound fast on rocks of Labrador,
By love divine on one sweet errand rolled.

And, though thy healing waters far withdraw,
I, too, can wait and feed on hope of Thee
And of the dear recurrence of thy law,
Sure that the parting grace my morning saw
Abides its time to come in search of me.

LOWELL.

MORALITY.

We cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides;
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides.
  But tasks in hours of insight willed
  Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.

With aching hands and bleeding feet
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;
We bear the burden and the heat
Of the long day, and wish 't were done.
  Not till the hours of light return,
  All we have built do we discern.

Then, when the clouds are off the soul,
When thou dost bask in Nature's eye,
Ask how *she* viewed thy self-control,
Thy struggling, tasked morality —
  Nature, whose free, light, cheerful air
  Oft made thee, in thy gloom, despair.

And she, whose censure thou dost dread,
Whose eye thou wast afraid to seek,

See, on her face a glow is spread,
A strong emotion on her cheek!
"Ah, child!" she cries, "that strife divine,
Whence was it, for it is not mine?

"There is no effort on *my* brow —
I do not strive, I do not weep;
I rush with the swift spheres and glow
In joy, and when I will, I sleep.
Yet that severe, that earnest air,
I saw, I felt it once — but where?

"I knew not yet the gauge of time,
Nor wore the manacles of space;
I felt it in some other clime,
I saw it in some other place.
'Twas when the heavenly house I trod,
And lay upon the breast of God."

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

THE BATTLE AUTUMN OF 1862.

The flags of war like storm-birds fly,
  The charging trumpets blow;
Yet rolls no thunder in the sky,
  No earthquake strives below.

And, calm and patient, Nature keeps
  Her ancient promise well,
Though o'er her bloom and greenness sweeps
  The battle's breath of hell.

And still she walks in golden hours
  Through harvest-happy farms,
And still she wears her fruits and flowers
  Like jewels on her arms.

What mean the gladness of the plain,
  This joy of eve and morn,
The mirth that shakes the beard of grain
  And yellow locks of corn?

Ah! eyes may well be full of tears,
  And hearts with hate are hot;
But even-paced come round the years,
  And Nature changes not.

She meets with smiles our bitter grief,
With songs our groans of pain;
She mocks with tint of flower and leaf
The war field's crimson stain.

Still, in the cannon's pause, we hear
Her sweet thanksgiving-psalm;
Too near to God for doubt or fear,
She shares the eternal calm.

She knows the seed lies safe below
The fires that blast and burn;
For all the tears of blood we sow
She waits the rich return.

She sees with clearer eye than ours
The good of suffering born, —
The hearts that blossom like her flowers,
And ripen like her corn.

Oh, give to us, in times like these,
The vision of her eyes;
And make her fields and fruited trees
Our golden prophecies!

Oh, give to us her finer ear!
Above this stormy din,
We too would hear the bells of cheer
Ring peace and freedom in!

WHITTIER.

"THREE ROOTS BEAR UP DOMINION."

THREE roots bear up Dominion: Knowledge,
Will, —
These twain are strong, but stronger yet the
third, —
Obedience, — 't is the great tap-root that still,
Knit round the rock of Duty, is not stirred,
Though Heaven-loosed tempests spend their
utmost skill.

LOWELL.

"WHAT THEN REMAINS?"

What then remains? To seek
Those helps, for his occasions ever near
Who lacks not will to use them; vows, renewed
On the first motion of a holy thought;
Vigils of contemplation; praise, and prayer, —
A stream which from the fountain of the heart
Issuing, however feebly, nowhere flows
Without access of unexpected strength.
But, above all, the victory is most sure
For him who, seeking faith by virtue, strives
To yield entire submission to the law
Of conscience, — conscience reverenced and obeyed,
As God's most intimate presence in the soul,
And his most perfect image in the world.
Endeavor thus to live; these rules regard;
These helps solicit; and a steadfast seat
Shall then be yours among the happy few
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air,
Sons of the morning. For your nobler part,
Ere disencumbered of her mortal chains,
Doubt shall be quelled and trouble chased away,

With only such degree of sadness left
As may support longings of pure desire,
And strengthen love, rejoicing secretly
In the sublime attractions of the grave.

WORDSWORTH.

"FOR I HAVE EVER THOUGHT."

For I have ever thought that love might bless
The world with benefits unknowingly;
As does the nightingale, up-perchèd high,
And cloistered among cool and bunchèd leaves —
She sings but to her love, nor e'er conceives
How tiptoe Night holds back her dark gray hood.
Just so may love, although 't is understood
The mere commingling of passionate breath,
Produce more than our searching witnesseth.

KEATS.

"WE ARE WHAT WE ARE MADE."

We are what we are made; each following day
Is the creator of our human mould
Not less than was the first; the all-wise God
Gilds a few points in every several life,
And as each flower upon the fresh hillside,
And every colored petal of each flower,
Is sketched and dyed each with a new design.
Its spot of purple, and its streak of brown,
So each man's life shall have its proper lights.
And a few joys, a few peculiar charms,
For him round in the melancholy hours
And reconcile him to the common days.
Not many men see beauty in the fogs
Of close low pine-woods in a river town;
Yet unto me not morn's magnificence,
Nor the red rainbow of a summer eve,
Nor Rome, nor joyful Paris, nor the halls
Of rich men blazing hospitable light,
Nor wit, nor eloquence, — no, nor even the song
Of any woman that is now alive, —
Hath such a soul, such divine influence,
Such resurrection of the happy past,
As is to me when I behold the morn

Ope in such low moist roadside, and beneath
Peep the blue violets out of the black loam,
Pathetic silent poets that sing to me
Thine elegy, sweet singer, sainted wife.

EMERSON.

"TILL DEATH US PART."

"Till death us part,"
Thus speaks the heart
When each to each repeats the words of doom;
For better and for worse,
Through blessing and through curse,
We shall be one, till life's last hour shall come.

Life with its myriad grasp
Our yearning souls shall clasp
By ceaseless love and still expectant wonder:
In bonds that shall endure
Indissolubly sure
Till God in death shall part our paths asunder.

Till death us join!
Oh, word yet more divine,
Which to the breaking heart breathes hope sublime!
Through wasted hours,
And shattered powers,
We still are one, despite of change and time.

Death with his healing hand
Shall knit once more the band,
Which needs but that one link that none may sever;
Till, through the only Good,
Seen, felt, and understood,
The life in God shall make us one forever.

DEAN STANLEY.

"WE COULD NOT LOSE EACH OTHER."

We could not lose each other: worlds
On worlds piled ever higher
Would part like banked clouds lightning-cleft
By our two souls' desire.
Life ne'er divided us: Death tried,
But could not — Love's voice fine
Came luring through the dark — then ceased.
And I am wholly thine.

Mrs. Muloch Craik.

AMPHIBIAN.

The fancy I had to-day,
  Fancy which turned a fear!
I swam far out in the bay,
  Since waves laughed warm and clear.

I lay and looked at the sun,
  The noon-sun looked at me:
Between us two, no one
  Live creature, that I could see.

Yes! There came floating by
  Me, who lay floating too,
Such a strange butterfly!
  Creature as dear as new:

Because the membraned wings
  So wonderful, so wide,
So sun-suffused, were things
  Like soul and naught beside.

A handbreadth overhead!
  All of the sea my own,
It owned the sky instead;
  Both of us were alone.

I never shall join its flight,
For naught buoys flesh in air.
If it touch the sea — good-night!
Death sure and swift waits there.

Can the insect feel the better
For watching the uncouth play
Of limbs that slip the fetter,
Pretend as they were not clay?

Undoubtedly I rejoice
That the air comports so well
With a creature which had the choice
Of the land once. Who can tell?

What if a certain soul
Which early slipped its sheath,
And has for its home the whole
Of heaven, thus look beneath,

Thus watch one who, in the world,
Both lives and likes life's way,
Nor wishes the wings unfurled
That sleep in the worm, they say?

But sometimes when the weather
Is blue, and warm waves tempt
To free one's self of tether,
And try a life exempt

From worldly noise and dust,
In the sphere which overbrims
With passion and thought, — why, just
Unable to fly, one swims!

By passion and thought upborne,
One smiles to one's self, "They fare
Scarce better, they need not scorn
Our sea, who live in the air!"

Emancipate through passion
And thought, with sea for sky,
We substitute, in a fashion,
For heaven — poetry:

Which sea, to all intent,
Gives flesh such noon-disport
As a finer element
Affords the spirit-sort.

Whatever they are, we seem:
Imagine the thing they know;
All deeds they do, we dream;
Can heaven be else but so?

And meantime, yonder streak
Meets the horizon's verge;
That is the land, to seek
If we tire or dread the surge;

Land the solid and safe, —
To welcome again (confess!)
When, high and dry, we chafe
The body, and don the dress.

Does she look, pity, wonder
At one who mimics flight,
Swims — heaven above, sea under,
Yet always earth in sight?

BROWNING.

THE HOUSEHOLDER.

SAVAGE I was sitting in my house, late, lone:
Dreary, weary with the long day's work:
Head of me, heart of me, stupid as a stone:
Tongue-tied now, now blaspheming like a Turk;
When, in a moment, just a knock, call, cry,
Half a pang, and all a rapture, there again were we! —
"What, and is it really you again?" quoth I:
"I again, what else did you expect?" quoth She.

"Never mind, hie away from this old house —
Every crumbling brick embrowned with sin and shame!
Quick, in its corners ere certain shapes arouse!
Let them — every devil of the night — lay claim,
Make and mend, or rap and rend, for me!
Good-by!
God be their guard from disturbance at their glee,

Till, crash, comes down the carcass in a heap!" quoth I:
"Nay, but there's a decency required!" quoth She.

"Ah, but if you knew how time has dragged, days, nights!
All the neighbor-talk with man and maid — such men!
All the fuss and trouble of street-sounds, window-sights:
All the worry of flapping door and echoing roof; and then,
All the fancies . . . Who were they had leave, dared try
Darker arts that almost struck despair in me?
If you knew but how I dwelt down here!" quoth I:
"And was I so better off up there?" quoth She.

"Help and get it over! *Reunited to his wife*
(How draw up the paper lets the parish-people know!)
Lies M. or N., departed from this life,
Day the this or that, month and year the so and so,
What i' the way of final flourish? Prose, verse? Try!

Affliction sore, long time he bore, or what is it to be?

Till God did please to grant him ease. Do end!" quoth I:

"I end with — Love is all and Death is naught!" quoth She.

BROWNING.

"AND THOU, THOUGH STRONG IN LOVE."

And thou, though strong in love, art all too weak
In reason, in self-government too slow;
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek
Our blest reunion in the shades below.
The invisible world with thee hath sympathized;
Be thy affections raised and solemnized.

Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend,—
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end:
For this the passion to excess was driven,—
That self might be annulled: her bondage prove
The fetters of a dream, opposed to love.

WORDSWORTH.

DAS EWIGWEIBLICHE.

How was I worthy so divine a loss,
  Deepening my midnights, kindling all my mornings?
Why waste such precious wood to make my cross,
  Such far-sought roses for my crown of thorns?

And when she came, how earned I such a gift?
  Why spend on me, a poor earth-delving mole,
The fireside sweetnesses, the heavenward lift,
  The hourly mercy, of a woman's soul?

Ah, did we know to give her all her right,
  What wonders even in our poor clay were done!
It is not Woman leaves us to our night,
  But our brute earth that grovels from her sun.

Our nobler cultured fields and gracious domes
  We whirl too oft from her who still shines on

To light in vain our caves and clefts, the homes
Of night-bird instincts pained till she be gone.

Still must this body starve our souls with shade;
But when Death makes us what we were before,
Then shall her sunshine all our depths invade,
And not a shadow stain heaven's crystal floor.

LOWELL.

"FROM THE STILL SPHERE."

From the still sphere where dwells my highest
hope,
Stand off, I pray you, nor disturb the air!
Lest, while you boast it living, it should die,
And I lose all, whose all is centred there.

Bring me no arguments, no reasoned proof;
How if their weakness cloud that sacred
trust?
Leave it to God alone to mark its growth
And keep it deathless — till I turn to dust.

Nor is this all, — though more I dare not say, —
Words would but marshal thoughts to end-
less strife;
Enough, if, cherished in my being's core,
The silent hope may mould the lowly life.

Lucy Smith.

"YES! HOPE MAY WITH MY STRONG DESIRE KEEP PACE."

YES! hope may with my strong desire keep
pace,
And I be undeluded, unbetrayed;
For if of our affections none finds grace
In sight of Heaven, then wherefore hath God
made
The world which we inhabit? Better plea
Love cannot have, than that in loving thee
Glory to that Eternal Peace is paid,
Who such divinity to thee imparts
As hallows and makes pure all gentle hearts.
His hope is treacherous only whose love dies
With beauty, which is varying every hour;
But in chaste hearts, uninfluenced by the power
Of outward change, there blooms a deathless
flower
That breathes on earth the air of paradise.

No mortal object did these eyes behold
When first they met the placid light of thine,
And my soul felt her destiny divine,
And hope of endless peace in me grew bold:

Heaven-born, the soul a heavenward course
must hold;
Beyond the visible world she soars to seek
(For what delights the sense is false and weak)
Ideal Form, the universal mould.
The wise man, I affirm, can find no rest
In that which perishes: nor will he lend
His heart to aught that doth on time depend.
'T is sense, unbridled will, and not true love,
That kills the soul: love betters what is best,
Even here below, but more in heaven above.

MICHAEL ANGELO, TRANS. BY WORDSWORTH.

THE DEAD HOUSE.

HERE once my step was quickened,
  Here beckoned the opening door,
And welcome thrilled from the threshold
  To the foot it had known before.

A glow came forth to meet me
  From the flame that laughed in the grate,
And shadows adance on the ceiling,
  Danced blither with mine for a mate.

"I claim you, old friend," yawned the arm-
    chair,
  "This corner, you know, is your seat;"
"Rest your slippers on me," beamed the fen-
    der,
  "I brighten at touch of your feet."

"We know the practiced finger,"
  Said the books, "that seems like brain;"
And the shy page rustled the secret
  It had kept till I came again.

Sang the pillow, "My down once quivered
  On nightingales' throats that flew

Through moonlit gardens of Hafiz
To gather quaint dreams for you."

Ah me, where the Past sowed heart's-ease,
The Present plucks rue for us men!
I come back: that scar unhealing
Was not in the churchyard then.

But, I think, the house is unaltered,
I will go and beg to look
At the rooms that were once familiar
To my life as its bed to a brook.

Unaltered! Alas for the sameness
That makes the change but more!
'T is a dead man I see in the mirrors,
'T is his tread that chills the floor!

To learn such a simple lesson,
Need I go to Paris and Rome,
That the many make the household,
But only one the home?

'T was just a womanly presence,
An influence unexpressed,
But a rose she had worn, on my grave-sod,
Were more than long life with the rest!

'T was a smile, 't was a garment's rustle,
'T was nothing that I can phrase,

But the whole dumb dwelling grew conscious,
And put on her looks and ways.

Were it mine I would close the shutters,
Like lids when the life is fled,
And the funeral fire should wind it,
This corpse of a home that is dead.

For it died that autumn morning
When she, its soul, was borne
To lie all dark on the hillside
That looks over woodland and corn.

LOWELL.

"AS MEN BORN BLIND."

As men born blind must ponder upon light,
Deaf men on sound, though pondering seems vain;
Since only *seeing* tells the joy of sight;
And *hearing* only music can explain;
So I, Beloved, must needs my spirit strain —
Long as endures life's dark and silent night —
Some image of a future bliss to gain.

Knowledge will widen, — that must mean, for thee,
God clearer seen in all his power has wrought;
And oh! my thinker, still more bold and free
The range and energy of ceaseless thought.
High hopes are these; but yet, for one like me,
A simple image, with past rapture fraught,
Seems best to shadow forth what heaven may be.

Our life had days and years most glad and fair,
Yet one joy thrills me still all joys above,

Because it rose on an almost despair —
We two were parted; should we meet?
Oh! Love,
I did not dare expect you, —*you were there!*
That says it all; and dying may but prove
A like surprise, and give me strength to bear.

LUCY SMITH.

DEATH IN ARABIA.

He who died at Azan sends
This to comfort all his friends.

"Faithful friends! It lies, I know,
Pale and cold, and white as snow,
And ye say, 'Abdullah 's dead,'
Weeping at the foot and head.
I can see your falling tears,
I can hear your sighs and prayers,
Yet I smile, and whisper this:
I am not the thing you kiss;
Cease your tears, and let it lie,
It was mine, it is not I.

"Faithful friends! be wise, and dry
Straightway every weeping eye.
What ye lift upon the bier
Is not worth a single tear.
'T is an empty seashell — one
Out of which the pearl has gone;
The shell is broken — it lies there;
The pearl, the all, the soul is here.
'T is an earthen jar, whose lid
Allah sealed, the while it hid

The treasure of his treasury.
A mind that loved him — let it lie!
Let the shard be earth's once more,
Since the gold is in his store!

"Sweet friends! what the women lave
For the last sleep of the grave,
Is a hut which I am quitting,
Is a garment no more fitting,
Is a cage from which at last
Like a bird my soul has passed.
Love the inmate, not the room;
The wearer, not the garb; the plume
Of the eagle, not the bars
That kept him from those splendid stars.

"Allah glorious! Allah good!
Now thy world is understood!
Now the long, long wonder ends.
Yet ye weep, my erring friends,
While the man whom you call dead,
In unspoken bliss instead
Lives, and loves you — lost, 't is true,
To the light that shines for you,
But in a light ye cannot see
Of undisturbed felicity,
In a perfect Paradise,
And a love that never dies.

"Weep awhile, if ye are fain —
Sunshine still must follow rain —
Only not at death — for death,
Now I know, is that first breath
Which our souls draw when they enter
Life that is of all life centre.

"I am gone before your face
A moment's worth, a little space.
When you come where I have stepped
You will wonder why you wept,
You will learn, by true love taught,
That here is all, and there is naught.

"Be ye stout of heart, and come
Bravely onward to your home.
La il Allah — Allah Ìa!
O love divine! O love alway!"

He who died at Azan gave
This to them who made his grave.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

THE SEED GROWING SECRETLY.

Dear, secret greenness! nurst below
  Tempests and winds and winter nights!
Vex not, that but One sees thee grow;
  That One made all these lesser lights.

What needs a conscience calm and bright
  Within itself, an outward test?
Who breaks his glass, to take more light,
  Makes way for storms into his rest.

Then bless thy secret growth, nor catch
  At noise, but thrive unseen and dumb;
Keep clean, bear fruit, earn life, and watch
  Till the white-wingèd reapers come!

Henry Vaughan.

THE FLOWER.

How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clean
Are thy returns! e'en as the flowers in spring;
To which, besides their own demean,
The late-past frosts tributes of pleasure bring.
Grief melts away
Like snow in May,
As if there were no such cold thing.

Who could have thought my shriveled heart
Could have recovered greenness? It was gone
Quite underground; as flowers depart
To see their mother-root when they have blown;
Where they together
All the hard weather,
Dead to the world, keep house unknown.

. . . . . .

And now in age I bud again,
After so many deaths I live and write;
I once more smell the dew and rain,
And relish versing: O my only light,
It cannot be
That I am he
On whom thy tempests fell at night.

HERBERT.

"IS IT, THEN, REGRET FOR BURIED TIME?"

Is it, then, regret for buried time
That keenlier in sweet April wakes,
And meets the year, and gives and takes
The colors of the crescent prime?

Not all; the songs, the stirring air,
The life re-orient out of dust,
Cry through the sense to hearten trust
In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret; the face will shine
Upon me, while I muse alone;
And that dear voice I once have known
Still speak to me of me and mine:

Yet less of sorrow lives in me
For days of happy commune dead;
Less yearning for the friendship fled
Than some strong bond which is to be.

TENNYSON.

"FOR THOU, O SPRING! CANST RENOVATE."

For thou, O Spring! canst renovate
All that high God did first create.
Be still his arm and architect,
Rebuild the ruin, mend defect;
Chemist to vamp old worlds with new,
Coat sea and sky with heavenlier blue,
New tint the plumage of the birds,
And slough decay from grazing herds,
Sweep ruins from the scarpèd mountain,
Cleanse the torrent at the fountain,
Purge alpine air by towns defiled,
Bring to fair mother fairer child,
Not less renew the heart and brain,
Scatter the sloth, wash out the stain,
Make the aged eye sun-clear,
To parting soul bring grandeur near.
Under gentle types, my Spring
Masks the might of Nature's king,
An energy that searches thorough
From Chaos to the dawning morrow;
Into all our human plight,
The soul's pilgrimage and flight;
In city or in solitude,

Step by step, lifts bad to good,
Without halting, without rest,
Lifting Better up to Best;
Planting seeds of knowledge pure,
Through earth to ripen, through heaven endure.

EMERSON.

ON ONE WHO DIED IN MAY.

Why, Death, what dost thou here
This time o' the year?
Peach-blow and apple-blossom,
Clouds white as my love's bosom,
Young meadows, hastening their green laps to fill
With store of buttercup and daffodil, —
But thou, thou ugly thing,
What dost thou here?

Why, Death, what dost thou here
This time o' the year?
Fair at the old oak's knee
The young anemone,
Fair the plash-places set
With dog-tooth violet,
The shad-flower pale,
The first sloop-sail,
Fair are all sights, fair are all sounds of spring,
But thou, thou hateful thing,
What dost thou here?

Dark Death let fall a tear!
"Why am I here?

O heart ungrateful! will man never know
I am his friend, and never was his foe?
Whose the sweet season's then, if it be not
mine?
Mine, not the bobolink's, that voice divine
Chasing the shadows o'er the bending wheat;
'T is a dead voice, not his, that sings so sweet.
Whose wanhope pales that nun-like lily tall
Beside the garden wall,
But hers, whose radiant eyes and slender
grace
Sleep in the grave that crowns yon tufted hill?
All hope, all memory,
Have their deep springs in me,
And Love, that else might fade,
By me immortal made,
Spurns at the grave, leaps to the welcoming
skies,
And burns a steadfast star to steadfast eyes."

CLARENCE COOK.

"THE FOOD OF HOPE."

THE food of hope
Is meditated action; robbed of this,
Her whole support, she languishes and dies.
We perish also; for we live by hope
And by desire; we see by the glad light,
And breathe the sweet air of futurity;
And so we live, or else we have no life.

WORDSWORTH.

RUGBY CHAPEL.

O STRONG soul, by what shore
Tarriest thou now? For that force
Surely has not been left vain!
Somewhere, surely, afar
In the sounding labor-house vast
Of being, is practiced that strength,
Zealous, beneficent, firm!
  Yes, in some far-shining sphere,
Conscious or not of the past,
Still thou performest the word
Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live —
Prompt, unwearied, as here!
Still thou upraisest with zeal
The humble good from the ground,
Sternly repressest the bad!
Still, like a trumpet, dost rouse
Those who with half-open eyes
Tread the border-land dim
'Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st,
Succorest! — this was thy work,
This was thy life upon earth.

And through thee I believe
In the noble and great who are gone;

. . . . . .

Servants of God! — or sons
Shall I not call you? Because
Not as servants ye knew
Your Father's innermost mind,
His, who unwillingly sees
One of his little ones lost —
Yours is the praise, if mankind
Hath not as yet in its march
Fainted, and fallen, and died!

See! In the rocks of the world
Marches the host of mankind,
A feeble, wavering line.
Where are they tending? — A God
Marshaled them, gave them their goal. —
Ah, but the way is so long!

Years they have been in the wild!
Sore thirst plagues them, the rocks,
Rising all round, overawe;
Factions divide them, their host
Threatens to break, to dissolve. —
Ah, keep, keep them combined!
Else, of the myriads who fill
That army, not one shall arrive;
Sole they shall stray; on the rocks
Batter forever in vain,
Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need
Of your fainting, dispirited race,
Ye like angels appear,
Radiant with ardor divine.
Beacons of hope, ye appear!
Languor is not in your heart,
Weakness is not in your word,
Weariness not on your brow.
Ye alight in our van! at your voice,
Panic, despair, flee away.
Ye move through the ranks, recall
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
Praise, reinspire the brave.
Order, courage, return;
Eyes rekindling, and prayers,
Follow your steps as ye go.
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,
Strengthen the wavering line,
Stablish, continue our march,
On, to the bound of the waste,
On, to the City of God.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

"A HUNGER SEIZED MY HEART."

A HUNGER seized my heart; I read
  Of that glad year which once had been,
  In those fallen leaves which kept their green,
The noble letters of the dead:

And strangely on the silence broke
  The silent-speaking words, and strange
  Was love's dumb cry defying change
To test his worth; and strangely spoke

The faith, the vigor, bold to dwell
  On doubts that drive the coward back,
  And keen through wordy snares to track
Suggestion to her inmost cell.

So word by word, and line by line,
  The dead man touched me from the past,
  And all at once it seemed at last
His living soul was flashed on mine,

And mine in his was wound, and whirled
  About empyreal heights of thought,
  And came on that which is, and caught
The deep pulsations of the world.

TENNYSON.

"SPIRITS ESCAPED FROM THE BODY."

Spirits escaped from the body can enter and
be with the living;
Entering unseen, and retiring unquestioned,
they bring — do they feel too? —
Joy, pure joy, as they mingle and mix inner
essence with essence.

Spirits with spirits commingle and separate;
lightly as winds do,
Spice-laden South with the ocean-born zephyr!
they mingle and sunder.

CLOUGH.

PROSPICE.

Fear death? — to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle 's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so — one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,

Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's
arrears
Of pain, darkness, and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the
brave,
The black minute 's at end,
And the elements rage, the fiend-voices that
rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of
pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee
again,
And with God be the rest!

BROWNING.

"CONTEMPLATE ALL THIS WORK OF TIME."

CONTEMPLATE all this work of Time,
  The giant laboring in his youth;
  Nor dream of human love and truth,
As dying Nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead
  Are breathers of an ampler day
  For ever nobler ends. They say,
The solid earth whereon we tread,

In tracts of fluent heat began,
  And grew to seeming-random forms,
  The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
Till at the last arose the man;

Who throve and branched from clime to clime,
  The herald of a higher race,
  And of himself in higher place,
If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more;
  And, crowned with attributes of woe

Like glories, move his course, and show
That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipped in baths of hissing tears,
And battered with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly
The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;
Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.

TENNYSON.

"THE SUN SET, BUT NOT HIS HOPE."

THE sun set, but not his hope: —
Stars rose, his faith was earlier up:
Fixed on the enormous galaxy,
Deeper and older seemed his eye,
And matched his sufferance sublime
The taciturnity of Time.

EMERSON.

"LET ME GO WHERE'ER I WILL."

Let me go where'er I will,
I hear a sky-born music still:
It sounds from all things old,
It sounds from all things young,
From all that 's fair, from all that 's foul,
Peals out a cheerful song.
It is not only in the rose,
It is not only in the bird,
Not only where the rainbow glows,
Nor in the song of woman heard,
But in the darkest, meanest things
There alway, alway something sings.
'T is not in the high stars alone,
Nor in the cups of budding flowers,
Nor in the redbreast's mellow tone,
Nor in the bow that smiles in showers,
But in the mud and scum of things
There alway, alway something sings.

Emerson.

"I HAVE SEEN A CURIOUS CHILD."

I HAVE seen
A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
Of inland ground, applying to his ear
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell,
To which, in silence hushed, his very soul
Listened intensely; and his countenance soon
Brightened with joy; for murmurings from within
Were heard, — sonorous cadences! whereby,
To his belief, the monitor expressed
Mysterious union with its native sea.
Even such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of faith; and there are times,
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
Authentic tidings of invisible things;
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
And central peace, subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,
Adore and worship when you know it not;
Pious beyond the intention of your thought,
Devout above the meaning of your will.

WORDSWORTH.

"BUT OVER ALL HIS CROWNING GRACE."

But over all his crowning grace,
Wherefor thanks God his daily praise,
Is the purging of his eye
To see the people of the sky:
From blue mount and headland dim
Friendly hands stretch forth to him,
Him they beckon, him advise
Of heavenlier prosperities
And a more excelling grace
And a truer bosom-glow
Than the wine-fed feasters know.
Teach him gladly to postpone
Pleasures to another stage
Beyond the scope of human age,
Freely as task at eve undone
Waits unblamed to-morrow's sun.

EMERSON.

HINTS AND GLIMPSES.

When the glad morning dawns
And lights the dewy lawns,
Changing the night's cold tears to glittering gems,
And crowning lowliest flowers with diadems,
And toying with the misty veil that floats
O'er the fresh landscape and conceals
Its loveliness, save when some breeze reveals
A brief, bright glimpse on which the glad eye dotes,
Dost thou not catch a glimmer of the truth
Of the eternal youth?
Dost thou not feel that darkness and decay,
All, all shall pass away,
Until beneath the sinking sun
The task of woe is done?

'T is but a world of types and shadows, this.
Our sweetest hope, our holiest love,
Is but the fluttering of the unfledged dove,
A slight foreshadowing of the coming bliss.
When, as the day grows dim,
Soft music steals on the delighted ear,
The wild bird on the swaying limb,

Or instrumental tones, or human voices dear,
They are but breathings from a higher sphere,
Bearing a few faint notes of the eternal hymn.
Thou hast loved beauty, and thine eye and heart
Have reveled in the magic world of art,
Caught the deep passion of the pictured face,
And the mute marble's grace,
Until thy ravished soul had wrought
Within itself that high embodied thought;
Then to the same fine instinct true,
Hast knelt where lowliest mosses grew,
And kissed from the wild rose the trembling dew.
And thou hast sought the beautiful in books,
And thou hast felt each glowing trace
Was but reflected grace,
A mirage on the atmosphere of time
Of those realities sublime,
Those harmonies of thought and form and hue,
That marriage of the beautiful and true,
Which eyes unsealed by death shall surely see
In the full life to be.

When, in the quiet midnight hour,
Thoughts of strange sweetness o'er the spirit steal, —

They are but whispers of that watching Power
That sees within the bud the folded flower,
And guards the germ of good that erring
hearts conceal.

And thus the friendly Presence saith:
"There is no age; there is no death;
And when decay with grating jars
Wears through thy prison's rusty bars,
Then the freed captive, rising, must
Shake off the old unworthy dust,
And wake to real life, with childhood's artless
trust."

MRS. F. H. COOKE.

HIDDEN LIFE.

Since Eden it keeps the secret!
Not a flower beside it knows
To distill from the day the fragrance
And beauty that flood the rose.

Silently speeds the secret
From the loving eye of the sun
To the willing heart of the flower:
The life of the twain is one.

Folded within my being,
A wonder to me is taught,
Too deep for curious seeing,
Or fathom of sounding thought.

Of all sweet mysteries holiest!
Faded are rose and sun!
The Highest hides in the lowliest:
My Father and I are one.

Charles G. Ames.

SACRED JOY.

Oh, tell me whence that joy doth spring,
  Whose diet is divine and fair,
Which wears heaven like a bridal ring,
  And tramples on doubts and despair?

Sure, holiness the magnet is,
  And love the lure that wooes thee down;
Which makes the high transcendent bliss
  Of knowing thee, so rarely known!

HENRY VAUGHAN.

FLOWERS WITHOUT FRUIT.

PRUNE thou thy words, the thoughts control
  That o'er thee swell and throng;
They will condense within thy soul,
  And change to purpose strong.

But he who lets his feelings run
  In soft, luxurious flow,
Shrinks when hard service must be done,
  And faints at every woe.

Faith's meanest deed more favor bears
  Where hearts and wills are weighed,
Than brightest transports, choicest prayers,
  Which bloom their hour and fade.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.

FREEDOM.

Once I wished I might rehearse
Freedom's pæan in my verse,
That the slave who caught the strain
Should throb until he snapped his chain.
But the Spirit said, "Not so;
Speak it not, or speak it low;
Name not lightly to be said,
Gift too precious to be prayed,
Passion not to be expressed
But by heaving of the breast;
Yet, — wouldst thou the mountain find
Where this deity is shrined,
Who gives to seas and sunset skies
Their unspent beauty of surprise,
And, when it lists him, waken can
Brute or savage into man;
Or, if in thy heart he shine,
Blends the starry fates with thine,
Draws angels nigh to dwell with thee,
And makes thy thoughts archangels be;
Freedom's secret wilt thou know? —
Counsel not with flesh and blood;
Loiter not for cloak or food;
Right thou feelest, rush to do."

Emerson.

"SO SOMETIMES COMES TO SOUL AND SENSE."

So sometimes comes to soul and sense
The feeling which is evidence
That very near about us lies
The realm of spiritual mysteries.
The sphere of the supernal powers
Impinges on this world of ours.
The low and dark horizon lifts,
To light the scenic terror shifts;
The breath of a diviner air
Blows down the answer of a prayer:
That all our sorrow, pain, and doubt,
A great compassion clasps about,
And law and goodness, love and force,
Are wedded fast beyond divorce.
Then duty leaves to love its task,
The beggar Self forgets to ask;
With smile of trust and folded hands,
The passive soul in waiting stands
To feel, as flowers the sun and dew,
The one true Life its own renew.

WHITTIER.

"AND PRESENTLY THE SKY IS CHANGED."

And presently the sky is changed; O world!
What pictures and what harmonies are thine!
The clouds are rich and dark, the air serene,
So like the soul of me, what if 't were me?
A melancholy better than all mirth.
Comes the sweet sadness at the retrospect,
Or at the foresight of obscurer years?
Like yon slow-sailing cloudy promontory,
Whereon the purple iris dwells in beauty
Superior to all its gaudy skirts.
And, that no day of life may lack romance,
The spiritual stars rise nightly, shedding down
A private beam into each several heart.
Daily the bending skies solicit man,
The seasons chariot him from this exile,
The rainbow hours bedeck his glowing chair,
The storm-winds urge the heavy weeks along,
Suns haste to set, that so remoter lights
Beckon the wanderer to his vaster home.

Emerson.

THE KITTEN AND THE FALLING LEAVES.

That way look, my infant, lo!
What a pretty baby show!
See the kitten on the wall,
Sporting with the leaves that fall,
Withered leaves — one — two — and three —
From the lofty elder-tree!
Through the calm and frosty air
Of this morning bright and fair,
Eddying round and round they sink,
Softly, slowly: one might think
From the motions that are made,
Every little leaf conveyed
Sylph or fairy hither tending, —
To his lower world descending,
Each invisible and mute,
In this wavering parachute.
— But the kitten, how she starts,
Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts!
First at one, and then its fellow
Just as light and just as yellow;
There are many now — now one —
Now they stop, and there are none.

What intenseness of desire
In her upward eye of fire!
With a tiger-leap half way
Now she meets the coming prey,
Lets it go as fast, and then
Has it in her power again:
Now she works with three or four,
Like an Indian conjurer;
Quick as he in feats of art,
Far beyond in joy of heart.

. . . . . .

Here, for neither babe nor me,
Other playmate can I see.
Of the countless living things,
That with stir of feet and wings
(In the sun, or under shade,
Upon bough or grassy blade),
And with busy revelings,
Chirp and song, and murmurings,
Made this orchard's narrow space,
And this vale, so blithe a place;
Multitudes are swept away,
Never more to breathe the day:
Some are sleeping; some in bands
Traveled into distant lands;
Others slunk to moor and wood,
Far from human neighborhood;
And, among the kinds that keep
With us closer fellowship,

With us openly abide,
All have laid their mirth aside.

If you look to vale or hill,
If you listen, all is still,
Save a little neighboring rill,
That from out the rocky ground
Strikes a solitary sound.
Vainly glitter hill and plain,
And the air is calm in vain;
Vainly Morning spreads the lure
Of a sky serene and pure;
Creature none can she decoy
Into open sign of joy.
Is it that they have a fear
Of the dreary season near?
Or that other pleasures be
Sweeter e'en than gayety?
Yet, whate'er enjoyments dwell
In the impenetrable cell
Of the silent heart which Nature
Furnishes to every creature;
Whatsoe'er we feel and know
Too sedate for outward show —
Such a light of gladness breaks,
Pretty Kitten! from thy freaks, —
Spreads with such a living grace
O'er my little Laura's face;
Yes, the sight so stirs and charms

Thee, baby, laughing in my arms,
That almost I could repine
That your transports are not mine,
That I do not wholly fare
Even as ye do, thoughtless pair!
And I will have my careless season,
Spite of melancholy reason,
Will walk through life in such a way
That, when time brings on decay,
Now and then I may possess
Hours of perfect gladsomeness.
— Pleased by any random toy,
By a kitten's busy joy,
Or an infant's laughing eye
Sharing in the ecstasy;
I would fare like that or this,
Find my wisdom in my bliss;
Keep the sprightly soul awake,
And have faculties to take,
Even from things by sorrow wrought,
Matter for a jocund thought;
Spite of care, and spite of grief,
To gambol with life's falling leaf.

WORDSWORTH.

"AS THE BIRD TRIMS HER TO THE GALE."

As the bird trims her to the gale,
I trim myself to the storm of time,
I man the rudder, reef the sail,
Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime:
"Lowly faithful, banish fear,
Right onward drive unharmed;
The port, well worth the cruise, is near,
And every wave is charmed."

EMERSON.

WAITING.

Serene I fold my hands and wait,
Nor care for wind, or tide, or sea;
I rave no more 'gainst time or fate,
For, lo! my own shall come to me.

I stay my haste, I make delays,
For what avails this eager pace?
I stand amid the eternal ways,
And what is mine shall know my face.

Asleep, awake, by night or day,
The friends I seek are seeking me;
No wind can drive my bark astray,
Nor change the tide of destiny.

What matter if I stand alone?
I wait with joy the coming years;
My heart shall reap where it has sown,
And garner up its fruit of tears.

The waters know their own, and draw
The brook that springs in yonder height;
So flows the good with equal law
Unto the soul of pure delight.

The stars come nightly to the sky ;
The tidal wave unto the sea ;
Nor time nor space, nor deep, nor high,
Can keep my own away from me.

JOHN BURROUGHS.

MY PSALM.

I MOURN no more my vanished years:
  Beneath a tender rain,
An April rain of smiles and tears,
  My heart is young again.

The west winds blow, and singing low
  I hear the glad streams run;
The windows of my soul I throw
  Wide open to the sun.

No longer forward nor behind
  I look in hope or fear:
But, grateful, take the good I find,
  The best of now and here.

I plough no more a desert land
  To harvest weed and tare;
The manna dropping from God's hand
  Rebukes my painful care.

I break my pilgrim staff, I lay
  Aside the toiling oar;
The angel sought so far away
  I welcome at my door.

The airs of spring may never play
  Among the ripening corn,
Nor freshness of the flowers of May
  Blow through the autumn morn ;

Yet shall the blue-eyed gentian look
  Through fringèd lids to heaven,
And the pale aster in the brook
  Shall see its image given ;

The woods shall wear their robes of praise,
  The south-wind softly sigh,
And sweet calm days in golden haze
  Melt down the amber sky.

. . . . . .

Enough that blessings undeserved
  Have marked my erring track,
That wheresoe'er my feet have swerved,
  His chastening turned me back ;

That more and more a Providence
  Of love is understood,
Making the springs of time and sense
  Sweet with eternal good ;

That death seems but a covered way,
  Which opens into light,
Wherein no blinded child can stray
  Beyond the Father's sight ;

That care and trial seem at last,
Through memory's sunset air,
Like mountain ranges overpast
In purple distance fair;

That all the jarring notes of life
Seem blended in a psalm,
And all the angles of its strife
Slow rounding into calm.

And so the shadows fall apart,
And so the west winds play;
And all the windows of my heart
I open to the day.

WHITTIER.

"NOT ON THE VULGAR MASS."

Not on the vulgar mass
Called "work," must sentence pass,
Things done, that took the eye and had the price;
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice:

But all the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account:
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped:
All I could never be,
All men ignored in me,
This I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
That metaphor! and feel
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our clay,—
Thou, to whom fools propound,
When the wine makes its round,
"Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone, seize to-day!"

Fool! All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure.

He fixed thee mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest:
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee, and turn thee forth sufficiently impressed.

What though the earlier grooves
Which ran the laughing loves
Around thy base, no longer pause and press?

What though, about thy rim,
Skull-things in order grim
Grow out in graver mood, obey the sterner stress?

Look not thou down but up!
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp's flash, and trumpet's peal,
The new wine's foaming flow,
The Master's lips aglow!
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what need'st thou with earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who mouldest men!
And since, not even while the whirl was worst,
Did I, — to the wheel of life
With shapes and colors rife,
Bound dizzily, — mistake my end, to slake thy thirst:

So, take and use thy work,
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!
My times be in thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same!

BROWNING.

"AS FROM A MOUNTAIN'S TOP."

As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the morning
Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us,
Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities and hamlets,
So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the world far below her,
Dark no longer, but all illumined with love; and the pathway
Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and fair in the distance.
Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his image,
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she beheld him,
Only more beautiful made by his death-like silence and absence.
Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it was not;
Over him years had no power; he was not changed, but transfigured;
He had become to her heart as one who is dead and not absent;

Patience and abnegation of self and devotion
to others,
This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow
had taught her.
So was her love diffused, but, like to some
odorous spices,
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the
air with aroma;
Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but
to follow
Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of
her Saviour.

LONGFELLOW.

"SO NIGH IS GRANDEUR TO OUR DUST."

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, *Thou must*,
The youth replies, *I can*.

Oh, well for the fortunate soul
Which Music's wings infold,
Stealing away the memory
Of sorrows new and old!
Yet happier he whose inward sight,
Stayed on his subtle thought,
Shuts his sense on toys of time,
To vacant bosoms brought.
But best befriended of the God
He who, in evil times,
Warned by an inward voice,
Heeds not the darkness and the dread,
Biding by his rule and choice,
Feeling only the fiery thread
Leading over heroic ground,
Walled with mortal terror round,
To the aim which him allures,
And the sweet heaven his deed secures.

Peril around, all else appalling,
Cannon in front and leaden rain,
Him Duty through the clarion calling
To the van called not in vain.

Stainless soldier on the walls,
Knowing this, — and knows no more, —
Whoever fights, whoever falls,
Justice conquers evermore,
Justice after as before, —
And he who battles on her side,
God, though he were ten times slain,
Crowns him victor glorified,
Victor over death and pain.

EMERSON.

ALL SAINTS.

One feast, of holy days the crest,
I, though no Churchman, love to keep,
All Saints, — the unknown good that rest
In God's still memory folded deep;
The bravely dumb that did their deed,
And scorned to blot it with a name,
Men of the plain heroic breed,
That loved Heaven's silence more than fame.

Such lived not in the past alone,
But thread to-day the unheeding street,
And stairs to Sin and Famine known
Sing with the welcome of their feet;
The den they enter grows a shrine,
The grimy sash an oriel burns,
Their cup of water warms like wine,
Their speech is filled from heavenly urns.

About their brows to me appears
An aureole traced in tenderest light,
The rainbow-gleam of smiles through tears
In dying eyes, by them made bright,

Of souls that shivered on the edge
  Of that chill ford repassed no more,
And in their mercy felt the pledge
  And sweetness of the farther shore.

LOWELL.

"OH, LOVE — NO, LOVE!"

Oh, Love — no, Love! All the noise below, Love,
Groanings all and moanings — none of Life I lose!
All of Life 's a cry just of weariness and woe, Love —
"Hear, at least, thou happy one!" How can I, Love, but choose?

Only, when I do hear, sudden circle round me —
Much as when the moon's might frees a space from cloud —
Iridescent splendors: gloom — would else confound me —
Barriered off and banished far — bright-edged the blackest shroud!

Thronging through the cloud-rift, whose are they, the faces
Faint revealed yet sure divined, the famous ones of old?
"What," — they smile, — "our names, our deeds, so soon erases
Time upon his tablet where Life's glory lies enrolled?

"Was it for mere fool's-play, make-believe and mumming,
So we battled it like men, not boylike sulked or whined?
Each of us heard clang God's "Come!" and each was coming:
Soldiers all, to forward-face, not sneaks to lag behind!

"How of the field's fortune? That concerned our Leader!
Led, we struck our stroke nor cared for doings left and right:
Each as on his sole head, failer or succeeder,
Lay the blame or lit the praise: no care for cowards: fight!"

Then the cloud-rift broadens, spanning earth that 's under,
Wide our world displays its worth, man's strife and strife's success:
All the good and beauty, wonder crowning wonder,
Till my heart and soul applaud perfection, nothing less.

Only, at heart's utmost joy and triumph, terror
Sudden turns the blood to ice: a chill wind disencharms

All the late enchantment! What if all be
error —
If the halo irised round my head were, Love,
thine arms?

BROWNING.

"HOPE EVERMORE AND BELIEVE."

Hope evermore and believe, O man! for e'en as thy thought
So are the things that thou see'st; e'en as thy hope and belief.
Cowardly art thou and timid? They rise to provoke thee against them.
Hast thou courage? Enough, see them exulting to yield.
Yea, the rough rock, the dull earth, the wild sea's furying waters
(Violent say'st thou and hard, mighty thou think'st to destroy),
All with ineffable longing are waiting their Invader,
All, with one varying voice, call to him, Come and subdue!
Still for their Conqueror call, and, but for the joy of being conquered
(Rapture they will not forego), dare to resist and rebel;
Still, when resisting and raging, in soft under-voice say unto him,
Fear not, retire not, O man; hope evermore and believe!

Go from the east to the west, as the sun and
the stars direct thee,
Go with the girdle of man, go and encom-
pass the earth.
Not for the gain of the gold; for the getting,
the hoarding, the having,
But for the joy of the deed; but for the
Duty to do.
Go with the spiritual life, the higher volition
and action,
With the great girdle of God, go and en-
compass the earth!

CLOUGH.

"DEAR FRIEND, FAR OFF."

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,
So far, so near, in woe and weal;
Oh, loved the most when most I feel
There is a lower and a higher;

Known and unknown, human, divine!
Sweet human hand and lips and eye,
Dear heavenly friend that canst not die,
Mine, mine, forever, ever mine!

Strange friend, past, present, and to be,
Loved deeplier, darklier understood;
Behold I dream a dream of good
And mingle all the world with thee.

Thy voice is on the rolling air;
I hear thee where the waters run;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou, then? I cannot guess;
But though I seem in star and flower

To feel thee, some diffusive power,
I do not therefore love thee less:

My love involves the love before;
My love is vaster passion now;
Though mixed with God and Nature thou,
I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh;
I have thee still, and I rejoice:
I prosper, circled with thy voice;
I shall not lose thee though I die.

TENNYSON.

SPIRIT TO SPIRIT.

"Dead? Not to thee, thou keen watcher, not
silent, not viewless, to thee.
Immortal still wrapped in the mortal! I, from
the mortal set free,
Greet thee by many clear tokens thou smilest
to hear and to see.

"For I, when thou wakest at dawn, to thee am
the entering morn,
And I, when thou walkest abroad, am the dew
on the leaf and the thorn,
The tremulous glow of the noon, the twilight
on harvests of corn.

"I am the flower by the wood-path — thou
bendest to look in my eyes;
The bird in its nest in the thicket — thou
heedest my love-laden cries;
The planet that leads the night legions — thou
liftest thy gaze to the skies.

"And I am the soft-dropping rain, the snow
with its fluttering swarms;

The summer-day cloud on the hilltops, that
showeth thee manifold forms;
The wind from the south and the west, the
voice that sings courage in storms!

"Sweet was the earth to thee ever, but sweeter
by far to thee now;
How hast thou room for tears when all times
marvelest thou,
Beholding who dwells with God in the blossom-
ing sward and bough!

"Once as a wall were the mountains, once dark-
ened between us the sea;
No longer these thwart and baffle, forbidding
my passage to thee;
Immortal still wrapped in the mortal, I linger
till thou art set free!"

EDITH M. THOMAS.

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